

WABASH RIVER HERITAGE CORRIDOR COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes-January 8, 2003

Training Center at Cinergy's Cayuga Station

Vermillion County, Cayuga, IN

Members present:

Allen County-Ron James
Allen County-Paul McAfee(alternate)
Carroll County- Teresa Maxwell
Cass County-Janet Fawley
DNR-Steve Morris
Fountain County-Ron Howard
Huntington County-Mike Mettler
Knox County-Tracy Newberry
Miami County-Ken Einselen
Parke County-John Isaacs
Posey County-Tom Straw
Sullivan County-John Gettinger
Tippecanoe County-Norman (Lucky)
Neiburger
Vermillion County-Mike Craig
Vigo County-Keith Ruble
Wabash County-Ernie Passwater

Voting members not present:

Gibson County
Jay County
Warren County

Proxies

Adams County-Norman Neiburger
Wells County-Mike Mettler

Commission and DNR staff present:

Susan Benner-WHRCC Exec Director
Cynthia Webb-DNR

Non-voting members not present:

DOC-Tourism
IDEM
DNR Historic Preservation/Archeology
INDOT

Others present:

Bernie Dahl-Banks of the Wabash
Rory Robinson-National Park Service
Matthew Einselen
Lydia Einselen
Tom Knapke-Cinergy
Ruth Isaacs
Susan Ruble
Mrs. Straw
Martha Clarke
Dr. R. Edward Galloway

CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

Norman (Lucky) Neiburger called the meeting to order at 1:50 pm. The attendees introduced themselves. Lucky, on behalf of the commission, thanked Tom Knapke and Cinergy for their presentation prior to the meeting. Lucky announced that John and Ruth Isaacs had celebrated their 55th wedding anniversary recently.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF NOVEMBER 20th, 2002 MEETING MINUTES

There was a mistake in the spelling of Ken Einselen's name. The corrected minutes were approved and passed.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

It was brought to Lucky's attention that some members of the commission were concerned about the length of the meetings. Lucky said technically you are only allowed discussion on motions, but he doesn't want to restrict members input. There was discussion on this matter. Janet Fawley suggested that after fifteen to twenty minutes of discussion if a matter has not been resolved, then a committee should be appointed. Mike Mettler felt that there should be no more speakers for a while because of the full agenda. Steve Morris commented that he and Susan Benner were beginning to act upon a suggestion to include more information about agenda items when sending out the agenda. Ken Einselen felt this matter should be discussed in New Business. Ron Howard felt that we shouldn't be voting on approval of the minutes. Ron has researched this, using Robert's Rules, and he stated that the president was the only one who needs to approve the minutes. Lucky requested that any future complaints about how the meeting is run be addressed directly to him.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Susan Benner reported on the Water Trail Project. Susan reported a letter from Ted Leverman, DNR Fish & Wildlife, who has given support to the Water Trail Project. Susan suggested a formation of a committee, which would fall under the Recreational Development Committee. June 7th is National Trails Day. Susan suggested that it would be nice if the commission could coordinate an event to coincide with National Trails Day in order to get people canoeing on the river.

Susan also reported on the Wabash River Heritage Corridor Community Signs. Susan received a letter from John Leckie (INDOT). He posed the question of INDOT assisting the commission on this project to others within INDOT, and still has not received a reply. Susan asked the commission members if they had gathered any information, nothing was reported. This project would fall under the Historic Interpretation Committee. Ron James, Marianna Weinzapfel, and John Gettinger are the members of the Historic Interpretation Committee. Rory Robinson will act in an advisory capacity to the committee. Marianna Weinzapfel and Rory Robinson offered to design the WRHC Community Signs. Martha Clark suggested the commission look into having the signs developed through PEN Products. Lucky stated that we might be getting ahead of ourselves, spending money we don't have yet. John Gettinger thinks we should fund it. The signs will help us get funding easier and it will make the commission more visible and better known.

The commission had a booth at the Indiana Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts Annual Conference. While Susan was at the conference she picked up a brochure titled Indiana's River Friendly Farmer Program.

Susan sent the commission's official comments to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission regarding the proposed Huntington Dam Hydroelectric Project.

Susan sent the WRHCC accomplishments for 2002 to all 19 Soil and Water Conservation Districts to be included in their annual report.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT (continued)

WRHCC endorsement of support was forwarded to the American Rivers organization for the River Budget FY04.

COMMISSION FINANCIAL REPORT

Steve Morris passed out sheets showing the commission's financial situation. Steve pointed out that the sheets show negative figures at the bottom, this is the way accounting shows it. The one handout is for operating expenses. It shows \$59,750.00 for renewal of Susan Benner's contract. There was a beginning balance of \$10,000.00 for operating expenses, so there was \$69,750.00 total to work with on July 1st, the beginning of the fiscal year. There was \$2,034.06 spent against the \$10,000.00, which leaves \$7,965.94 for operating expenses. The summary report shows itemized expenses, such as \$52.26 to Verizon for the telephone expenditures. The itemized travel expenses list Nancy Grenard in error. Regarding the encumbered funds for Susan Benner's current contract, there is a balance of \$22,387.40.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE REPORT

No Report

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE REPORT

Lucky mentioned talking to the legislator for his county, Sheila Klinker. She is the vice-chair person for the House Ways & Means Committee. Sheila suggested that \$100,000, as opposed to \$150,000, is a more realistic amount to ask from legislators for commission operating expenses. The letter that Ron Howard wrote to his legislators was distributed to the commission members in order to be used as a template for their letters to their legislators. The response that Ron Howard received from his letter was read to the commission. Susan made packets with legislative information, which she passed out to the members of the Commission. Ernie Passwater mentioned he had sent letters to two legislators and has received no reply.

Regarding WRHC grant funds, Rory Robinson reported that DNR Director, John Goss, recently made it known that he believes there will be no money appropriated for Build Indiana projects. Also, Rory informed the commission there might be other funding avenues such as a 2-cent tax on bottled water and a \$2 increase in the tipping fees charged to dump trash in landfills.

Lucky Neiburger and Steve Morris passed out a proposed change to the statute that governs the commission, IC 14-13-6. The proposed change would make it easier to approve commission expenditures and has been reviewed by John Ryan, Director of DNR Division of Accounting.

On January 15th, 2003, the commission plans to meet with their legislators in downtown Indianapolis.

BANKS OF THE WABASH REPORT

No report

OLD BUSINESS

Corridor Management Plan

Rory Robinson reported he expects to have a draft of the plan by March. Rory also requested the commission's assistance in updating the county and community organizational resource listings. Rory provided the commission with his e-mail address – rory_robinson@nps.gov.

Scenic Byway

There was much discussion on the wording of Resolution No. 0211 regarding support for a state scenic byway in Tippecanoe County. Tom Straw made a motion to add an amendment to the resolution. Tom wanted the amendment to change “as a model *to be used*” to “as a model *that can be used*”. Ron James seconded the motion and motion passed.

NEW BUSINESS

Suggestions for future speakers

Because of the full agendas, as was discussed earlier, there were no speakers selected.

Letters sent/Letters received

Susan received a video from The Michiana Council of Governments and St. Joseph River Basin Commission concerning septic systems. Susan received a newsletter from Little River Wetlands Project, Inc. WALLA sent a thank you card. Susan received a summary report for the 10th Anniversary of the Lafayette Urban Enterprise Zone. Susan received the Hoosier Riverwatch newsletter in which a grant program for water monitoring equipment is offered. Tom Straw and John Gettinger expressed interest in water monitoring for their counties.

Determine Commission meeting locations for 2003

After discussion about locations for the next meetings for 2003, the following schedule was proposed:

Posey County-New Harmony would be May 14, 2003,
Wabash County-Honeywell Center would be July 9, 2003,
Warren County-Independence would be September 10, 2003, and
Carroll County-Delphi would be November 12, 2003.

Ron Howard made a motion to accept these locations and dates. John Gettinger seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Meeting Protocol

John Gettinger made a motion to have Lucky Neiburger appoint someone as parliamentarian. Janet Fawley seconded the motion and motion passed.

NEW BUSINESS (continued)

***L'Espirit de Quabache* Articles**

Susan Benner reported that articles were turned in as follows: NICHES, Fairbanks Park, Little River Wetland Project, West Lafayette Ice Rink, Eagle Viewing Day, Wabash and Erie Canal-Progress from Delphi, Chief Richardville House Project, Atheneum Rehabilitation, Paul Dresser Birthplace, and Little Turtle. These are all projects that have received funding. Lucky will be turning in an article from the President. It was suggested the article be about updating the WRHCC plan.

WRHCC Lease

John Gettinger made a motion to accept the lease for office space as proposed by the building owners in Lafayette. Mike Mettler seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Steve Morris mentioned the office lease requires liability insurance for indemnity. Steve has sent a letter to DNR chief legal counsel, but hasn't received a reply yet. Discussion ensued. Ron Howard made a motion that Steve Morris, Lucky Neiburger, and Susan Benner resolve the matter of liability insurance and purchase insurance if necessary. Ernie Passwater seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Other Items

The Upper Wabash River Basin Commission is seeking support for a grant proposal to create a Watershed Management Plan. Janet Fawley made a motion to support their efforts for the grant application. Mike Mettler seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Ron James made a motion to request changes to IC 14-13-6, as proposed, to make it easier to approve commission expenditures. John Gettinger seconded the motion. Motion passed. Lucky suggested that Senator Weatherwax might be able to help get this changed.

At this time Susan stated she had a quote for the newsletter. The quote was \$517.94 for 1,500 copies. Ron James made a motion to approve the printing quote on the newsletter. Tom Straw seconded the motion. Motion passed.

At this time Susan mentioned the Wabash River Guide Book by Jerry Hay. She said it would be a good reference to have in the commission's library. Mike Mettler made a motion to approve the expenditure for ordering the Wabash River Guide Book at \$15.95. Ron James seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Steve needed approval to pay Susan Benner for \$7.40 worth of postage stamps. Ron James made a motion to approve expenditure for stamps. Tom Straw seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Regarding the cost of distributing boxes of the Wabash River Heritage Corridor brochure to Indiana welcome centers, rest areas, and visitor centers, Ron James made a motion to approve expenditures for the shipping the brochures at \$8 a box, up to 50 boxes for a total of \$400. Ken Einselen seconded the motion. Motion passed.

NEW BUSINESS (continued)

Steve Morris needed approval to pay the telephone bill from Verizon. Ron James made a motion to approve the \$52.26 expenditure for paying the telephone bill. Tom Straw seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Ron James motioned to approve office lease expenditures of \$300 for August thru January and \$50 per month afterwards. Ken Einselen seconded. Motion was deemed unnecessary due to prior commission approval of lease.

Tom Straw made a motion to approve the expenditure of \$100 for 20 Legislative Directories. Mike Mettler seconded the motion. Motion passed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Keith Ruble suggested a "Thank You" letter to Cinergy for the tour and the lunch they provided. John Isaacs thanked Ron Howard for suggesting and arranging this meeting with Cinergy.

John Gettinger informed commission members about a newspaper editorial in the Vincennes Sun-Commercial. It was about the WRHCC and the status of their grant program. The article quoted Tracy Newberry as stating there was a "moratorium" on further grants.

The Mid America Trails & Greenways Conference is September 21-24, 2003, at the Hyatt Regency in Indianapolis, Indiana. The commission decided to have an exhibit at the conference. John Gettinger made a motion to approve expenditure of \$400 for exhibit space at the conference. John Isaacs seconded the motion. Motion passed.

NEXT MEETING-March 12, 2003, at the Indiana Government Center in Indianapolis.

MEETING ADJOURNED